

RUTHERFORD COUNTY MANAGER

County Commissioners

Julius Owens, *Chairman*

William Eckler, *Vice Chairman*

Greg Lovelace

Eddie Holland

Roger Richard

Carl Classen, *County Manager*

Hazel S. Haynes, *Clerk to the Board*

Richard Williams, *County Attorney*

October 4, 2013

To: County Commissioners

From: Carl Classen, County Manager

Weekly Report Items **Weeks Ending October 4, 2013**

General:

This is a highlight of items from the previous week. It is not meant to be exhaustive but to inform the Commissioners and Department Heads.

Airport:

The Airport sold 1191.7 gallons of 100LL fuel and 895 gallons of Jet A fuel. Jeff Hill and Judy Toney conducted a safety inspection of the airport at the request of Chris Roach. Fire Marshal, Roger Hollifield and Building Inspector, Clint Houser also met with Chris Roach to discuss fire protection at the Airport.

Board of Elections:

All logic and accuracy testing of the election equipment has been completed and the test results have been prepared to upload to the State. Staff will begin mailing absentee ballots on Friday, October 4th and have begun organizing election supplies for the precincts. Letters will be sent tomorrow to poll workers regarding the training scheduled for October 15th. Recruitment continues for poll workers for the November 5th election.

Building Inspections:

Building Inspections issued 39 permits for a total of \$7,049 in fees. Of those 39 permits, 7 were for new house starts which we hope is a sign of a steady upward trend. The month of September was a nice month with 12 new house starts for the month. Inspectors have had a busy week in which they conducted 181 inspections. Included in those inspections are several inspections at Horsehead as they prepare to finalize much of their major construction soon. Staff has also been conducting inspections on the renovations to the Revenue Department which seems to be progressing well. The Director has participated in various meetings, as well as, conducting field inspections.

Clerk to the Board:

Agendas were prepared this week for the October 7 County Commissioners' Meeting that will be held at the Lake Lure Municipal Center at 6:00 PM. The Clerk made a trip to Lake Lure with Rhonda Owens and Jai Doherty on Monday in order to prepare for the meeting. A Department Head meeting was held on Wednesday. Good to see "Recycle Ruthie" again. It had been too long. Commissioners were invited to attend the grand opening of both Tam's Tack House and Bed and Barn on Thursday. Later in the day, commissioners attended a Farm City Celebration Tour and Dinner at Cooperative Extension. The day finished up with the New Century Scholars Induction Program at the Foundation at Isothermal Community College. On Friday the Chairman will attend the "Meet Duke Lifepoint" at Rutherford Hospital.

Cooperative Extension:

This report is for last week. The **Director** assisted producers with value added calves, participated in Conservation Field Day, assisted with a tour of a beef cattle operation for the Cook Smart, Eat Smart class and continues to assist clients with technical problems through office visits, phone calls, email, and farm visits. The **Family and Consumer Sciences Agent** taught a Stress and Time Management workshop, served as a judge at Ellenboro fair, and taught Cook Smart Eat Smart. The **Agricultural Agent** continues networking with the Appalachian Sustainable Agriculture Project with Intern for several of Extensions outreach programs. The agent attended a Consumer Focus Group for the Farmer's Market and Grower/Vendor, attended a Farm Tour with Eat Smart/Cook Smart class, and networked with Caldwell and Burke Counties regarding Nourishing NC Community Garden Grant Project. 189 Contacts. **4-H Youth Development Agent** continues to service clients.

County Manager:

The County Manager attended numerous meetings this week. Beginning the week, Mr. Classen met with the Revenue Department, attended the weekly update meeting with Solid Waste, attended the weekly update meeting with Danny Searcy and David Odom, which includes Greyrock and Queens Gap, and attended the weekly ED update meeting with Matt Blackwell. Continuing, Mr. Classen traveled to Raleigh to attend a NCDOT meeting, and attended a department head meeting at Cooperative Extension that discussed the new VoIP and Enhanced Recycling. Mr. Classen then met with Paula Roach and Richard Williams regarding Queens Gap, attended a Community Health Board meeting, attended a NCPTS meeting, attended a conference call regarding Airport projects, met with Commissioners Holland and Lovelace to review the agenda, and attended the Farm City Celebration Tour and dinner. Ending the week, Mr. Classen attended a Western Highlands Board meeting.

Economic Development

The Executive Director met with the County Manager to review economic development activities; prepared a response to a NC Department of Commerce industrial prospect RFI; met with Tom Johnson from AdvantageWest to discuss prospects; met with an ally from NC Department of Commerce to discuss possible assistance for expansion of an existing industry; attended the department heads meeting with the county manager; met with a representative from the NC DOT to discuss current issues; attended a meeting with Rutherford Regional Hospital; continued follow up activities on industrial recruitment opportunities and completed a preliminary Golden Leaf application on behalf of an industrial prospect. The Project Administrator worked with website host provider on updates; met with Western NC DOC representative to talk about current state assistance programs regarding changes and updates; worked with NC DOC Commerce finance office and Broad River Water Authority on a preliminary infrastructure grant possibility; visited sites to get a visual perspective of the current state of these properties; met with a consultant to tour two sites for a recruitment opportunity; and prepared and sent follow up responses for recent existing industry visits.

The Economic Development Assistant prepared an invoice for reimbursement from the Department of Commerce for services provided through the NC LITE UP help desk for the month of September; prepared the monthly safety report; collected data for the monthly building permits report; assisted in the collection of data in response to an RFI from the Department of Commerce; and assembled an information package for a prospect tour.

Emergency Management/Fire Marshal:

The Fire Marshal met with Chris Roach and Clint Houser to discuss fire protection issues at the Rutherford County Airport. The Fire Marshal also participated in a water rescue exercise at Lake James State Park with Burke, McDowell and Cleveland Counties, NC Emergency Management and the Royal National Lifeboat Institution. Participation in this exercise, as part of the Incident Management Team, is credited towards meeting the 2014 Emergency Management Performance Grant requirements. Staff attended a meeting to discuss the regional hazard mitigation plan development and began the annual fire prevention program at the elementary schools.

Finance:

Auditors are here and will be here periodically for the next 3-4 weeks. The Finance Office is working closely with departments and vendors to update vendor files with E-Verify data as required by new legislation. The Director and Assistant Director attended a meeting in Morganton this week and attended several meetings with various departments pertaining to budget items.

Human Resources:

The HR Director held meetings to discuss personnel issues, exit interviews, and retirements. Employees who have left the service of Rutherford County are Cynthia Spears (TDA). The HR Director, along with DSS and IT, conducted interviews for the IT position at DSS, attended a department head meeting where she presented "Recycle Ruthie", attended a meeting with TDA, and attended a JCPC meeting.

Information Technology:

The Information Technology Department continues working on Tax software, as well as, continues working on the VoIP project. Staff is preparing to start DETAIL meetings about each phone in each department. IT is in the process of hiring two new staff members. We appreciate your patience as we work through the hiring process.

Library:

The D.A.R. (Daughters of the American Revolution) sponsored a program at the Haynes Branch Library for Constitution Week. A prize was awarded to any student who learned and recited the preamble to the constitution. Two homeschooled students were awarded prizes. The Director attended a department head meeting at the Cooperative Extension Department and participated with the D.A.R. in serving breakfast to the Overmountain Victory Trail participants as they begin their march toward Cowpens and Kings Mountain. A local student, Erin Murray, and her mother, Paula, used Rutherford County Library resources to help design a costume for the Thomas Jefferson book character parade, which was held on Friday, September 27th. Erin dressed as a barn owl named "Soren" from the Guardians of Ga'Hoole book series. The library received a thank you note from the family with a picture of Erin in the winning costume. (See Special Highlights).

Public Works/Planning:

The garage had 20 preventative maintenance service calls, 15 repairs, 7 tire service calls and 8 other repairs. Maintenance completed 30 work orders and repairs along with preventative maintenance and groundskeeping. The Revenue Department renovation continues on schedule and is going well. TC Strickland Construction and all subcontractors, including those directly sub-contracted by the County are working very well together.

Greyrock Project 3B is proceeding nicely. Anticipate being completed in about 2 ½ weeks.

Project 8 has been graded to the first intersection. It is matted and seeded and ready for stone.

Project 9 (Cold Mountain Road) is finished. Work has begun on the next cul-de-sac for this project. Project 7 was reported as complete last week but they are still putting down final stone. Project 4 Paving bid to be awarded at the October Commissioner's meeting. We are advertising for paving for Project 7, part of 8 and part of 9 this week. Ideally all of that will be paved this year with all other paving after the first of the year.

Queens Gap Updates: Contract for Project 1 will be awarded at the October Commissioner's meeting. Project 2 bid opening scheduled for October 17. The PER for the water system is nearly complete. Flushing volumes have been determined. Work is continuing on Project 3 design.

Register of Deeds:

The Register of Deeds office had an active week with 398 recordings and collecting \$15,225.00.

The Revenue Department answered 446 phone calls and assisted 222 citizens who came in to the office (6 being PUV). 51 deeds were recorded and 53 were transferred. Mapping completed 7 splits, 1 merge, 7 acreage adjustments and created 9 new maps. 5 new E911 addressees were assigned. Ownership of 105 addressees was updated. The GIS website had 164,293 hits and 97,746 successful searches. Appraisers completed 7 field reviews and 32 building permits. Electronic

payments consisted of 35 by credit/debit, 140 by website, and 19 by phone. 574 citizens came in to pay at the counter. 17 deeds were certified. Enforced collection action consisted of 9 attachments and 20 garnishments. Staff worked 28 overpayments, 81 bankruptcy payments/issues, 2 discoveries, and 44 releases. 1280 pieces of mail were received and processed. July and December motor vehicles renewals are currently in process. The office remodel is on schedule and staff anticipate moving back to the Courthouse in 3 - 4 weeks.

Senior Center:

The seniors tested their “Mayberry” knowledge on Tuesday with Andy Griffith Show Trivia. The seniors had their first opportunity to write to their brand new pen pals at Spindale Elementary this week on Thursday. Participants may wear pink each Friday in October in recognition of Breast Cancer Awareness Month. The center will also be having our Tailgate Yard Sale on Friday morning from 8:00-11:00 in the small parking lot at the Senior Center.

Social Services:

On Monday, Brona Causby, Processing Assistance III, was recognized as the Employee of the Quarter for the fourth quarter of 2013. Brona, who has been with the agency for 2 years is primarily responsible for all agency mail, which includes scanning mail directly into paperless case files. Brona is organized, dependable, and is well respected by her co-workers (see special highlights). On Tuesday, the soft launch of NC FAST Projects 2 and 6, which includes Medicaid and Work First, as well as Project 7, which includes changes in the system due to the implementation of the Affordable Care Act, were launched. Also, on Tuesday the Director, Adult Services Supervisor, and one of the Adult Services Social Workers met with staff from Skilled Creations Inc. concerning a guardianship consumer; and the Director and IT Analyst participated in interviews, along with the County IT and Human Resources Directors, for the vacant DSS analyst position. On Wednesday, the Administrative Officer attended the Department Head meeting for the Director in regards to the new phone system and commingling recyclables. Also on Wednesday, the Director, IM Administrator, and IM Supervisors attended the weekly NC FAST conference call; the Director, Social Work Program Manager, and Children's Services Supervisors participated in a meeting with several mental health providers in the county to discuss services for families and creative and effective way to meet their needs (later this month, a meeting will be held with Smokey Mountain Center officials to continue these discussions); and the Director attended the Community Health Council meeting at Rutherford Regional. On Thursday, the Director and Fiscal Officer participated in the monthly fiscal conference call.

Soil and Water: **FEDERAL SHUT DOWN THIS WEEK**

Last week, the Admin/Education Specialist worked on submitting a grant application packet for 2 schools to install an Outdoor Environmental Learning Center. Staff prepared for the Conservation Field Day for 5th Grade students which was scheduled for Wednesday, September 25th at R-S Central High School. Due to weather the field day had to be cancelled and moved to the scheduled Rain Date on Tuesday, October 8th. This week the Soil Technician worked with one farmer on taking soil samples and providing technical assistance on farm planning to reduce soil erosion. He also toured several of the watershed dams with members of the watershed committee and state NRCS engineering staff. Prepared for the Conservation Employee Training (CET) next week in Nags Head.

Solid Waste:

The Solid Waste staff served 403 customers, hauled 50 loads from convenience centers, and shipped 32 loads to Lenoir. The Director attended the weekly solid waste meeting with Carl Classen, attended the department head meeting, and worked with Rhonda Owens on the website. The Solid Waste staff continues to perform everyday job duties. The prison camp and state inspector performed inspections this week. The staff continues to pick up electronics at the convenience sites and the recycling process continues to run smoothly. Everyone please remember the ribbon cutting is October 10th at 9:00 am.

Tourism:

The TDA is continuing work on several new features for the website and mobile app. Updates and new displays will be coming soon to the Welcome Center in the near future. The TAF (Tourism Asset Foundation) will be hosting The Bechtler Legacy event on Thursday, October 17th from 5 p.m. to 7 p.m. at The Bechtler House in Rutherfordton. Please come and support this endeavor.

Transportation Services:

EMS: This week EMS responded to a record 181 emergency calls and 101 convalescent calls. Personnel attended EMS Today Conference in Greensboro this week. The Director attended the Community Health Council meeting and a Debt Set-Off Hearing with the Finance Director.

Transit: Transit drove 10,909 miles, completed 1,080 local trips and 88 out of county trips, transported 274 unduplicated passengers and collected \$17,352 in revenue. Transit's contract and rates with agencies is in the process of being revised and merged with EMS into one Transportation Services Contract. There were no safety violations.

Veterans Office:

During the last week, staff made 229 contacts, received 83 telephone interviews, and had 53 mailouts for veterans to complete documents and requests for service. The Service Officer continues to help veterans with food from the food pantry. As Christmas fastly approaches, the Veterans Office has the **Toys for Totes Box**. Please help in filling these boxes to give to local children in need at Christmas.

SPECIAL HIGHLIGHTS



north carolina's
RUTHERFORD COUNTY
solid waste

828.287.6125
www.WeSortForYou.com



Introducing New Countywide Enhanced Recycling

Drop off your commingled recyclables at your
Convenience Center or curbside in town.

ALL ITEMS CAN NOW BE COMMINGLED

• Mail and Mixed Paper	• Newspapers and Inserts
• White Paper	• Magazines and Catalogs
• Steel/Tin Food Cans	• Cereal and Shoe Boxes
• Juice Boxes	• Glass Food/Beverage Containers
• Milk Cartons	• Paperback and Hardback Books
• Telephone Books	• Plastics #1-7 and Plastic Containers
• Corrugated Cardboard	• Aluminum Food/Beverage Containers

YOU MIX ... WE SORT





BRONA CAUSBY, DSS EMPLOYEE OF THE QUARTER



REVENUE DEPARTMENT PROGRESS